

Fact Sheet

July 2002

Farmland Protection Program in Missouri

Overview

The Farmland Protection Program (FPP) is a voluntary program that helps landowners keep their land in agriculture, and protects historic sites on agricultural lands. The program provides matching funds to organizations with existing farmland protection, or other conservation easement programs, to purchase conservation easements on land. FPP is re-authorized in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (The Farm Bill). The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) manages the program.

How FPP works

USDA works through state, tribal, and local governments, and non-governmental organizations, such as Land Trusts, to conduct FPP. These entities acquire conservation easements from landowners. Participating landowners agree not to convert their land to non-agricultural uses and to develop and implement a conservation plan with NRCS.

To participate, a landowner develops a Conservation Easement agreement with a Land Trust or other entity. The entity then submits a proposal to the NRCS state conservationist through a local USDA Service Center. Proposals are then evaluated for eligibility. If eligible proposals exceed available funding for the year, then proposals are ranked to determine the distribution of funding. Proposals that are eligible but unfunded due to insufficient USDA funding, can be retained for funding consideration the following year.

Eligibility

To qualify for FPP, the land must be part or all of a farm or ranch, ***and*** must have either:

- over 50 percent of the soils rated as "prime" farmland or farmland of "statewide importance," ***or***
- a site listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or be eligible for listing.

In addition the land must:

- be privately owned;
- be facing development pressure (the current market value of the land exceeds the agricultural value of the land);
- be large enough to sustain agricultural production;
- be adjacent to other agricultural parcels;
- have a NRCS conservation plan;
- have a pending offer for a Conservation Easement with a qualifying entity (e.g., a Land Trust with a Conservation Easement program).

If the land cannot be converted to non-agricultural uses because of existing deed restrictions or other legal constraints, it is ineligible for FPP.

Qualified Entities

This may include any state, tribal, and local governments, and non-governmental organizations that have a Conservation Easement program. Currently in Missouri, the only organizations with active Conservation Easement programs are Land Trusts. One source of information about Land Trusts in Missouri is from the Land Trust Alliance (<http://www.lta.org/findlandtrust/MO.htm>).

Funding

FPP is funded through the Commodity Credit Corporation. The FPP share of the easement cost must not exceed 50 percent of the appraised fair market value of the conservation easement. A State, Tribal or local government or non-governmental organization such as a Land Trust may supplement its share of the easement cost through a landowner's donation, *not to exceed 25 percent* of the appraised fair market value of the conservation easement.

FPP Timeline in Missouri

Pre-proposal. Although not required, this will help NRCS personnel to develop a State FPP Plan for submission to the national office, and will affect the allocation of FPP funding for Missouri. It should include an estimated cost of the Conservation Easement.

Request For Proposals (RFP). The USDA will publish this in the Federal Register when FPP funding for the year is available. Proposals must be submitted no later than 45 days from the date of the RFP publication.

Proposal. A complete proposal for FPP funding is required to be submitted to the NRCS State Conservationist, preferably via a local USDA Service Center. For detailed proposal requirements, see the publication Proposal Criteria for the Farmland Protection Program in Missouri.

Obligation of funds. Awards will be given, and all agreements and contracts signed so that funds can be obligated by the end of the Federal Fiscal Year, which is Sept. 30.

For More Information

Contact one of the following NRCS Urban Conservationists at a USDA Service Center:

Kansas City area:

Raymond Goodwin
816-474-4240
rgoodwin@marc.org

St. Louis / St. Charles area:

Renee Cook
636-922-2833 ext. 3
renee.cook@mo.usda.gov

Springfield area:

DeDe Vest
417-581-2719 ext. 3
dede.vest@mo.usda.gov

Columbia area:

Frank Gordon
573-446-9091 ext. 3
frank.gordon@mo.usda.gov

For areas other than these, call your local USDA Service Center, listed in the telephone book under U.S. Department of Agriculture.

For general program assistance and information, contact:

Fred Young
Columbia, MO
573-876-9427
fred.young@mo.usda.gov

Information is also available on the World Wide Web at:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmbill/2002/>

and for Missouri at:

<http://www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov/programs.html>



Visit USDA on the Web at:
<http://www.usda.gov/farmbill>

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